

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A slot machine comprising:
a plurality of reels, a rotatable reel, each of the reel reels comprising a reel strip bearing a
plurality of discrete symbols and a continuous graphical element extending
between adjacent ones of the discrete symbols such that the discrete symbols are
thematically unified by the graphical element; and
a processor operable to
rotate the reels reel to give the continuous graphical element a first velocity and at
least one of the plurality of discrete symbols a different second velocity;
and
stop the reels reel and the plurality of discrete symbols to place the discrete
symbols on the reel reels in visual association with a display area, and to
award a payout responsive to an alignment of a plurality of discrete
symbols associated with a winning combination along a selected payline.
2. (Cancelled).
3. (Currently Amended) The slot machine of claim 1, ~~further including means for~~
~~determining a payout based, at least in part, on the discrete symbols associated with the display~~
area wherein at least one of said reels comprises a video reel and wherein said processor is
operable to, for said at least one of said reels, move a selected one of said discrete symbols
relative to said continuous graphical element during a bonus game.
4. (Original) The slot machine of claim 1, wherein the discrete symbols are superimposed
over the graphical element.
5. (Original) The slot machine of claim 1, wherein the graphical element includes a trail.
6. (Original) The slot machine of claim 5, wherein the trail is selected from a group
consisting of a road and a board game path.

7. (Original) The slot machine of claim 1, wherein the reel is simulated on a video display.
8. (Original) The slot machine of claim 1, wherein the reel is physical and driven by a stepper motor.
9. (Currently Amended) A slot machine comprising:
a plurality of reels, a rotatable reel, each of the reel reels comprising a reel strip bearing a plurality of discrete symbol positions and a continuous graphical element extending between adjacent ones of the discrete symbol positions such that the discrete symbol positions are thematically unified by the graphical element, each of the reel reel strips also bearing a discrete symbol in at least one of said discrete symbol positions; and
a processor to rotate the reel to give the continuous graphical element a first velocity and the discrete symbol a different second velocity to allow the discrete symbol to move between the adjacent ones of the discrete symbol positions as the reel is rotated programmed to award a payout responsive to an alignment of a plurality of discrete symbols associated with a winning combination along a selected payline.
10. (Previously Presented) The slot machine of claim 9, further including means for rotating and stopping the reel and the discrete symbol to place a portion of the reel in visual association with a display area.
11. (Original) The slot machine of claim 9, wherein the discrete symbol is superimposed over the graphical element.
12. (Original) The slot machine of claim 9, wherein the graphical element includes a trail.
13. (Original) The slot machine of claim 12, wherein the trail is selected from a group consisting of a road and a board game path.

14. (Original) The slot machine of claim 9, wherein the reel is simulated on a video display.
15. (Original) The slot machine of claim 9, wherein the reel is physical and driven by a stepper motor.
16. (Currently Amended) The slot machine of claim 9, ~~further including means for determining a payout based on movement of the discrete symbol between the adjacent ones of the discrete symbol positions as the reel is rotated~~ wherein at least one of said reels comprises a video reel and wherein said processor is programmed to, for said at least one of said reels, move a selected one of said discrete symbols relative to said continuous graphical element during a bonus game.
17. (Currently Amended) The slot machine of claim ~~16~~ 9, wherein the payout accumulates based on each discrete symbol position traversed by the discrete symbol.
18. (Currently Amended) A method of conducting a slot game on a slot machine controlled by a processor, comprising:
 - receiving a wager from a player; and
 - rotating a plurality of reels ~~reel~~, each of the reel ~~reels~~ each comprising a reel strip bearing a plurality of discrete symbols and a continuous graphical element extending between adjacent ones of the discrete symbols such that the discrete symbols are thematically unified by the graphical element, ~~the rotating reel moving the continuous graphical element at a first velocity;~~
 - ~~moving at least one of the plurality of discrete symbols with a different second velocity relative to the graphical element; and~~
 - stopping the reels ~~reel~~ and the at least one discrete symbol to place a portion of the each reel in visual association with a display area; and
 - providing a payout responsive to an alignment of a winning combination of discrete symbols along a payline in said display area.

19. (Original) The method of claim 18, wherein the discrete symbols are superimposed over the graphical element.
20. (Original) The method of claim 18, wherein the graphical element includes a trail.
21. (Original) The method of claim 20, wherein the trail is selected from a group consisting of a road and a board game path.
22. (Original) The method of claim 18, wherein the reel is simulated on a video display.
23. (Original) The method of claim 18, wherein the reel is physical and driven by a stepper motor.
24. (Original) The method of claim 18, further including determining a payout based, at least in part, on the portion of the reel associated with the display area.
25. (Currently Amended) A method of conducting a slot game on a slot machine controlled by a processor, comprising:
 - receiving a wager from a player;
 - rotating a video reel ~~with a first velocity~~, the video reel bearing a plurality of discrete symbol positions and a continuous graphical element extending between adjacent ones of the discrete symbol positions such that the discrete symbol positions are thematically unified by the graphical element; ~~and~~
 - moving a discrete symbol ~~with a different second velocity~~ between the adjacent ones of the discrete symbol positions as the video reel is rotated; and
 - determining a payout based on the movement of the discrete symbol between the adjacent ones of the discrete symbol positions as the video reel is rotated.
26. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 25, further including stopping the reel to place a portion of the video reel in visual association with a display area.

27. (Original) The method of claim 25, wherein the discrete symbol is superimposed over the graphical element.
28. (Original) The method of claim 25, wherein the graphical element includes a trail.
29. (Original) The method of claim 28, wherein the trail is selected from a group consisting of a road and a board game path.
30. (Cancelled).
31. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 25, wherein ~~the reel is simulated on a video display~~ wherein the discrete symbol is moved at a first velocity relative to the continuous graphical element.
32. (Cancelled).
33. (Currently Amended) The method of claim ~~32~~ 25, wherein the payout accumulates based on each discrete symbol position traversed by the discrete symbol.
34. (Cancelled).
35. (Cancelled).
36. (Cancelled).
37. (Cancelled).